

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-2 and 5-13 remain in the application. Claims 1-2 and 5 have been amended.

In item 1 on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the specification has been objected to because of an informality. Appropriate correction has been made.

In item 2 on pages 2-4 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-2 and 5-13 have been rejected as being anticipated by Yraceburu et al. (US Pat. No. 6,409,332 B1) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

The rejection has been noted and claim 1 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the changes is found on page 18, line 25 to page 19, line 4 of the specification as well as original claim 5.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia:

a virtually limited first suction chamber disposed beneath the region of the printing heads, said first suction chamber having termination edges extending transversely to a transporting direction of said movable belt and limiting said first suction chamber in a longitudinal direction of said movable belt.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 3 of Yraceburu et al., only one plate 36 is connected to a pump 37 which creates negative pressure with respect to the transported paper sheet 16 in the print zone 34 near the printing head 14. There are no further suction units adjacent the plate 36 for creating negative pressure in order to properly transport the sheet.

In contrast, according to the invention of the instant application, the sheet passes along a path towards and away from the printing unit where a negative pressure keeps the sheet in close contact with the transport belt. A suction chamber (13) is provided in the area of the printing heads (5). The suction chamber (13) is formed with termination edges (31) in order to be able to adjust a negative pressure in the suction chamber (13) separately from adjacent chambers.

Clearly, Yraceburu et al. do not show "a virtually limited first suction chamber disposed beneath the region of the printing heads, said first suction chamber having termination edges extending transversely to a transporting direction of said movable belt and limiting said first suction chamber in a

longitudinal direction of said movable belt", as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over Yraceburu et al. and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

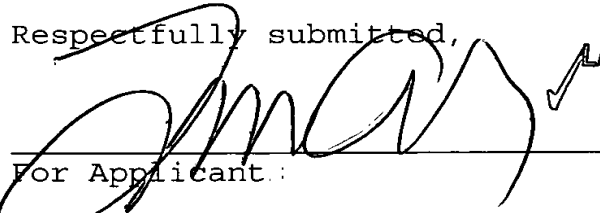
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-2 and 5-13 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the

Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



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